

**UNAPPROVED MINUTES
CITY OF MILPITAS
SISTER CITIES COMMISSION**

Minutes: Regular Meeting of Sister Cities Commission (SCC)
Date of Meeting: Thursday, February 26, 2004
Place of Meeting: Milpitas City Hall, 455 E. Calaveras Blvd., Committee Conference Room

I. Roll Chair Garcia called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners/Alternates Present: Arefi, Arthur, Downey, Garcia, Grilli, Iringan, Mateo, Swiger
Commissioners/Alternates Absent: Chahal
City Council Liaison Present: Bob Livengood
MUSD Liaison Present: Mike Mendizabal

II. Alternates Alternate Mateo was seated.

III. Pledge Chair Garcia led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Minutes **MOTION** to approve the Minutes of January 22, 2004.

M/S: Grilli/Swiger Ayes: All

V. Agenda **MOTION** to approve the February 26, 2004 agenda.

M/S: Swiger/Iringan Ayes: All

VI. Announcements/Correspondence

Chair Garcia presented Linda Downey with an official certificate as a commission member. She announced that Roselda Mateo is the first alternate, and introduced the new second alternate, Massoud Arefi.

Staff announced that she was asked to provide a City Hall tour for an official from Daet, Philippines in November. She was not advised that the Daet representative returned home with a recommendation to adopt a sister city relationship with Milpitas. Staff noted that discussions regarding a sister city relationship pertained to the Commission's Focus Areas, Criteria and the Request for Sister City form. The Mayor sent a letter to Daet on February 20, explaining the appropriate process to become a sister city.

Staff distributed passwords for the Sister Cities International website and requested updates of contact information on the Directory of Local Officials.

VII. Citizen's Forum

No members from the public present.

VIII. Old Business

1. GLOBAL VILLAGE EVENT: 5/01/04, 11 AM TO 4 PM, LOCATION TBA

Vice Chair Arthur noted she received the Global Village information packet. The organizers thought that Tsukuba was the only sister city that needed a booth, however, she has obtained one booth for general information, one booth for arts crafts, and one booth for Japanese food. Staff noted that the Commission's booth is for the representation of official sister cities. The Japanese food booth will feature California rolls. Iringan will follow-up with the Philippine-American Association to obtain information for a booth and activity of Filipino culture. Staff noted that the plaques presented to the City by Dagupan could be there along with a framed MOU. He will need to have crafts and activities related to Dagupan – perhaps a cultural activity or game for children. Vice Chair Arthur reported that this is a 10-foot by 20-foot booth for artifacts, gifts and activities related to the sister cities. Food booths are separate and set aside in another area. Arthur noted that Sushi Lovers owner, Charlene Tsao, is willing to donate the California rolls. Chair Garcia stated she will research how many rolls were sold two years ago and make an increase of 10%. Arthur asked about the revenue. Staff stated that the commissions may decide what to do with the revenue. Swiger asked if revenue can we put it into the commission budget. Staff replied no, however, someone on the commission can offer to hold the revenue on behalf of the commission to be used for its purposes. Swiger asked if there is a sales tax on the food. Staff said yes, the event organizers will handle the sales tax. Council member Livengood explained the sales tax process for this type of event. Charlene Tsao is asking for a thank you letter for her donation. Staff noted that the commission may write an official letter and present it to her at a meeting. Further updates will be provided at the commission meeting in March.

2. 2004 DRAFT WORK PLAN REVIEW

Staff requested a review of the final draft work plan that is included in the agenda packet, with updates from the January meeting. The events highlighted in yellow note the lead commissioner. The lead commissioner may create a subcommittee, which can also include non-commission members. Grilli asked how the lead assignments were made. Staff stated that if a commissioner has volunteered to be a lead for a particular city, then that commissioner's name is noted with events associated with that City. Staff noted that this is a working document and is subject to revision. Staff asked if there is a possibility that Dagupan Mayor Benjamin Lim will visit after the May elections. Vice Chair Arthur replied that there was some discussion of will visit in July not April. Iringan will follow-up regarding the Mayor's visit.

Staff will distribute updated copy of the work plan at the next agenda packet. This item will be removed from the agenda.

MOTION to adopt work plan with minor edits.

M/S: Grilli/Iringan Ayes: All

3. RECOMMENDATION OF SISTER CITIES RELATIONSHIP: HUIZHOU CITY, CHINA

Grilli stated that the final draft MOU was included in the commission packet. Staff and Grilli met with Francis Chien to discuss the presentation to Council on Feb. 20. They will meet again on March 1 to prepare for the Council meeting with the presenter from Huizhou. All commissioners are encouraged to attend the 3/02/04 Council session. Mr. Chien will request that supporting residents attend.

Swiger had questions about the MOU and asked for a possible text change. His intention is to ensure that there are not activities that will occur outside of the sister cities program. He feels that item one may open up events to happen outside of the sister cities commission. Chair Garcia noted that she believes item four addresses this issue. Grilli thinks the original memorandum is fine. There was also a question noting that this is a two-year MOU, yet there is only one exchange mentioned. Staff noted that this is only a minimum, however they may do two visits each year. Swiger thought that Huizhou's initial main interest was business. Garcia noted that Huizhou representatives repeatedly stated their interest in student and cultural exchanges. Vice Chair Arthur asked about the ease of obtaining a visa. Staff stated that when the U.S. accepts a foreign city as a sister city, it is easier for people of that city to obtain visas; this is why specific guidelines for exchanges are created in addition to the MOU as perhaps letters of understanding prior to travel. Arthur noted that we may not be able to afford to visit Huizhou, and these city representatives may visit Milpitas more often. Staff stated that this is set up as an even exchange, and therefore, the same number of exchange visits shall be maintained. Garcia stated she approved the final MOU as is. MUSD Liaison Mendizabel stated that their goal is to have a student exchange at the high school level in the next two years. Staff noted that this is certainly a possibility as Huizhou representatives specifically presented this in their presentations to the Commission. MUSD Liaison Mendizabel may opt to work with the lead commissioner Grilli should the draft MOU be approved by the City Council.

Chair Garcia recommended approval of the final draft of Huizhou MOU in its current form.

MOTION to approval final draft of Huizhou MOU for presentation to the City Council.

M/S: Grilli/Iringan Ayes: All

4. DAGUPAN CITY, PHILLIPINES: SISTER CITIES RELATIONSHIP

Iringan awaits responses to his e-mails sent to the Dagupan representative with proposed activities for the year 2004. Staff requested the Commission's review Swiger's thank you letter to Mrs. Iringan for her donation of \$200 towards the Dagupan gift. Staff will put format the letter as discussed and include a certificate and 50th Anniversary pen set.

5. TSUKUBA CITY, JAPAN: SISTER CITIES RELATIONSHIP

Chair Garcia reported that the Milpitas City Council approved the MOU with Tsukuba at its February 17, 2004, session for the next four years. Staff posted adult and student applications for the June visit and cultural exchange to Tsukuba. Vice Chair Arthur took applications to the middle schools with a deadline of March 10. Chair Garcia will contact the *Milpitas Post* regarding the visit.

Discussion followed regarding planning for the Milpitas-Tsukuba cultural exchange and need to confirm potential visits dates from Mayor Fujisawa. The commission will discuss a draft itinerary plan at their March meeting. Staff requested that the commission lead propose a draft itinerary and cost estimate. Chair Garcia will obtain some itinerary ideas from Tsukuba before the next meeting.

Vice Chair Arthur announced that she will not be able to travel to Tsukuba this year. Chair Garcia stated she is planning to attend. Vice Chair Arthur noted the need for at least one more adult to attend. She reported that the travel agency has kept the same low fee this year even though the group is smaller. Chair Garcia noted that the commission should send them a thank you letter. Staff noted that the letter may go out after the tickets are purchased or after the visit. Vice Chair Arthur noted the cost of a flight in June would be approximately \$682 plus tax, even though this is their peak season, with a departure date of June 11th, returning on June 20th.

Swiger distributed handouts of a proposed organizational chart due to concerns he perceived by the Mayor at the last City Council meeting. The chart noted equal funding for all cities. Chair Garcia stated that each program is different and the unique character of each relationship needs to be viewed separately. Chair Garcia stated her understanding is that the formation of a Sister Cities Association would support those relationships. Iringan asked if the association would have control of funds from the City. Grilli replied no, that the association would handle funds from groups and operate as a non-profit organization so that donations would be tax deductible. Chair Garcia inquired about Council funding. Staff replied that a budget proposal to the City Council would be considered. It may include a specific funding amount for each City; it is tentative. Staff would propose approximately \$2,600 per city, however this does not mean this amount would need to be fully spent. Grilli noted that City funding is for specific facets of each visit and this is a proposal that the Council has not approved yet. Iringan asked if the association would ask the City for funding. Grilli replied it would not. Chair Garcia noted that processes that are already in place are very similar to those that Swiger is showing on his organization chart. Mateo suggested that any funds raised should be donated to the new association instead of having separate funds as noted on the organization chart. Council member Livengood stated that the City Council would not fund one city more than other. He stated the City Council's perspective is that there should be an equal amount available for all sister cities, with a similar and equal reception, however if the groups go to events sponsored from an association, the visits may be more ornate because of more support from outside organizations. Grilli also noted that an association may help to 'level the playing field' through fundraisers that would be applied to any City that has the most need for support. Iringan asked who does the accounting for the association. Grilli noted that the association has to work within the IRS rules; they have to stay within their bylaws and incorporation regimens, where their function would be to support the international cultural exchanges. They are independent of the City, but they have to follow certain parameters. Livengood noted that changes will happen as the City adopts new sister cities. Initially there was only one (Kukizaki, now Tsukuba), and now there are two with the possibility of a third sister city. He noted that the relationships will change and visits will change as well, as each city cannot be visited each year. However, the structure deal with the dynamics of the situation will remain the same. Again, he underscored that from City's perspective, each city will be treated equally and that there is not a direct relationship between the City and the association.

Swiger noted a possible problem with the association where other cities may not want to contribute funds with the knowledge that it's going to other cities. Staff replied she has done some research on how other associations handled this issue: some charge an annual fee; some charge different amounts for various events and activities; some conduct fundraising to maintain funding in a general account. The association is primarily a fundraising entity, however it may also set up a dues structure. She added that there is increased flexibility for a non-profit organization that the government does not have.

By consensus, the commission decided to discuss this item further at the March meeting.

XI. CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

No report.

XII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. Sister Cities Association Update
2. Global Village Event: 5/01/04
3. Standing Items: Sister City Relationships/Cultural Exchanges:
 1. Recommended Sister Cities Relationship: Huizhou, China
 2. Tsukuba Relationship & Cultural Exchanges
 3. Dagupan Relationship & Cultural Exchanges

XIII. Adjournment

No further business was discussed with the meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m. until the next regularly scheduled meeting on March 25, 2004.

MOTION to adjourn.

M/S: Grilli/Swiger

Ayes: All

Respectfully Submitted,

Holly Cuciz
Recording Secretary

Leslie Stobbe
Staff Liaison